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MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

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Although the new charter proposed for the city of Los Angeles was defeated last June at the polls, several important charter amendments, advocated by the Municipal League of Los Angeles, were adopted at the November election. These amendments included measures consolidating the city assessment and tax-collection offices with those of the county, and combining municipal with state and county elections. The other amendments authorized the city: to compel railroads to elevate or depress railway tracks; to make and enforce all laws affecting the municipality; to conduct its public improvements by contract or day labor; to permit easements for public improvements through public parks; to vest in the hands of special commissioners the funds donated for public parks; to accommodate outside municipalities by the temporary sale of power; to pay semi-monthly or weekly salaries to its employees; to provide for possible meetings of the city council on five days each week. Of these the more important are the provisions for carrying on public improvements by either contract or day work—with an estimated annual saving of \$1,000,000; for permitting the consolidation of city and county officers; and for holding special city elections on the same day with state or county elections.

In June, 1915, a commission-manager charter was adopted for St. Augustine, Florida, by a majority of only 18 votes. The success of its operation may be gauged in some degree by facts brought out in the recent November election. At that time a vote was taken on the matter of a further charter revision, urged by opponents of the commission-manager plan then in operation. That plan was sustained by a vote of more than two to one.

The new charter adopted at the end of August by the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan, provides for a commission of seven, two elected from each of the three wards and one at large, to serve during a two-year term, and for a city manager appointed by the commission. The other elective officers are the comptroller, four county supervisors, and one constable in each ward, five library commissioners and two justices of the peace from the city at large. All administrative officers, except the city attorney, city clerk, city treasurer, and three assessors, are to be

appointed by the city manager, who will have powers similar to those given by the Dayton charter. For example, the city manager prepares the budget, and, as in Dayton, full publicity is secured by the requirement that a copy of the budget be mailed to every voter at least twenty days before action by the commission. The charter also contains provision for direct legislation and the recall, with the necessary percentages based on the total registration. An unusual feature is the requirement that the commissioners serve *ex officio* to the civil service board. The disadvantages of this arrangement are somewhat offset by the fact that the competitive classification includes all offices and employments for which a competitive examination can be used in the determination of fitness.

The commission form of government has been discontinued in Huntsville, Alabama, the action being due, it is alleged, to an increase in tax and water rates made necessary because of a falling off in revenues from the sale of liquor.

The National Municipal League held its twenty-second annual meeting at Springfield, Massachusetts, on November 23-25, in conjunction with a number of associations devoted to municipal reform, notably the City Managers Association, the Conference on Municipal Research, the Training School for Public Service, and the Civic Secretaries Conference. The program of the National Municipal League included an address by its President, Lawson Purdy, on "Some Advance Municipal Steps," an address by Clinton R. Woodruff on "Municipal Preparedness," a series of addresses by Charles A. Beard, W. D. Lightall, John J. Murphy and Governor Charles S. Whitman on "Political Parties in City Government: a Reconsideration of Old Viewpoints," another series on "Problems in City Planning," another on the "Extension of Municipal Activities and Municipal Expenditures," and a final series of addresses on the "Practical Operation of Various Forms of City Government." Reports of committees were also presented.

The National Municipal League's Committee on Instruction in Municipal Government has printed³ the results of its sixth inquiry concerning the extent to which American universities and colleges have made place for the subject in their present curricula. Information was

³ See *National Municipal Review*, v, No. 4, pp. 565-573 (October 1916). The article has also been reprinted.

secured by means of questionnaires sent to these institutions throughout the country, and has been tabulated as to courses devoted both wholly and partly to the teaching of municipal government, giving in each case the number of graduate and undergraduate students taking the courses and the amount of time which the courses cover. Four outstanding features may be noted regarding present-day instruction in municipal government. (1) The amount of instruction has steadily grown. Independent courses in municipal government were given in 1908 by 46 institutions, in 1912 by 64, and in 1916 by 95—a greater increase than has been shown in any other country. The number of institutions which offer definite, but not independent, instruction in municipal government is, of course, much larger (141). Three or more distinct courses devoted wholly to the subject are offered by 7 institutions. (2) There has been a decided improvement in the methods of teaching city government, due to the publication of better textbooks, of periodicals, and of an infinite number of pamphlets and reports on every conceivable phase of the subject. The lecture system has declined; individual research has become a popular method. (3) Forty-six institutions report some variety of research bureau, reference library, or workshop in connection with this instruction. And (4) the student is being brought into contact with the actual working of city government and administration through coöperation with neighboring cities. This is especially true in the case of post-graduate students. In general, the report shows that the progress made during the last few years is notable, and that one may reasonably expect a continuance in the future.

The *Proceedings* of the Seventh Annual Conference of Mayors and Other City Officials of New York State for 1916, bears the title of *City Problems* (Albany, 1916, pp. 117). The volume contains the following papers of interest: "The State and the Municipality," by Francis M. Hugo (secretary of state); "Unemployment in Cities," by Harry N. Hoffman (mayor, Elmira); "New York State's Coöperative Plan for Securing Municipal Data," by James T. Lennon (see below); "Uniform System of Accounting for Cities of the Third Class of New York State," by Fred S. Reusswig (deputy state comptroller); "Activated Sludge Method of Sewage Disposal," by T. Chalkley Hatton (chief engineer, Milwaukee sewage commission); "The Effect on Cities of Amendment to Workmen's Compensation Law," by Edward P. Lyon (commissioner, state industrial commission); "Uniform Health Bud-

gets," by Dr. Lindsay R. Williams (deputy health commissioner); "Exemption of Real and Personal Property for Taxation," by Martin M. Saxe (president, New York State tax commission); "The Attitude of the State Education Department Towards City Schools," by John H. Finley (commissioner of education); "Training for Public Service, with Special Reference to Training of Accountants," by E. A. Fitzpatrick; "New York State's Uniform Bond Law," by Edward S. Osborne (comptroller, Rochester); "Standard Units for Comparing Municipal Improvements," by A. Prescott Folwell; and "Limiting the Heights of Buildings and Restricting the Use of Property," by Lawson Purdy (president, New York City department of taxes and assessments).

A brief account has been issued of the facilities, work and services which are being maintained for the cities of New York State by the State Bureau of Municipal Information of the New York State Conference of Mayors and Other City Officials (*New York State's Coöperative Plan for Securing Municipal Data*, 11 pp.) Organized to "bring order out of chaos" in the collection of municipal data, the bureau has served as a central clearing-house for all the municipalities of the State; it announces itself as a "non-partisan, non-factional servant of each and every official in all cities in the State." All requests must be made to the bureau through city officials, and information is sent only to them—its character as exclusively an organization of and for the cities in the State distinguishes the bureau from all other similar undertakings in the country. Its detailed functions as outlined are manifold; briefly, it is to furnish all available information about any municipal problem to any New York State city official requesting it, to gather data on subjects of probable interest and distribute the information among city officials, to keep city officials in touch with one another by distributing new ideas and plans, to watch all legislation affecting municipalities and keep the cities informed about this kind of legislation, to represent, through its director, the interests of any city before any state department, to supply information about manufactures, price lists, etc., of apparatus and products used by cities, to issue and send to mayors and city clerks a semi-monthly bulletin containing general municipal information, announcements of activities and lists of subjects of research during the past fortnight. During the first eight months of its service, the bureau has investigated and issued reports on about 150 subjects in the field of municipal government and administration. Of these, special attention was given to municipal house-cleaning, water rates,

and salaries. A vast amount of information has been furnished to city officials at their request, and in addition to its general research special work has been carried on to a considerable extent for individual cities. The work of the bureau is entirely financed by cities of the State, under authority given by a general state law. The scale of contributions is \$500 annually from each first-class city, \$300 from each second class city, and \$150 from third-class cities, another unique feature of this coöperative bureau.

A series of Budget Bulletins is being issued by the Bureau of Municipal Research of the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association. To date two have appeared. No. 1 contains an analysis of proposed expenditures of city departments for 1916; the theme of No. 2 is that "the board of tax levy must cut radically to come within a forty-mill tax levy." Both bulletins are graphically illustrated.

For persons interested in public welfare work the reports of two cities should be useful. These are the *First Annual Report, Department of Public Welfare, City of Dallas* [Texas], 1915-1916 (pp 88.) and *The Department of Public Welfare, City of Dayton*. By D. F. Garland, director. (September, 1916. 15 pp.) The first-mentioned is a complete report which covers every variety of the welfare work of the city from its actual accomplishments to the possibilities to which it is hoped the department may rise. From the second report, that on the Dayton welfare department, might be quoted some of the results it has achieved. The death rate of the city has been reduced from 15.7 in 1913 to 13.7 in 1914 and to 13.007 in 1915. Furthermore, infant mortality has declined from 124 per thousand in 1913 to 95.9 in 1914 and to 87.2 in 1915. To this reduction the activities of the department in raising the standard of the milk supply, cleaner markets, bakeries and candy factories, its free clinics and its school inspections, its improvements in sewer conditions, and its general clean-up of the entire city, have been large contributors.

Four substantial contributions to the subject of unemployment in cities have been made, or are in course of preparation, by the mayor's committee on unemployment, New York City, and may be obtained through the secretary of the committee, Municipal Building, New York City. In January, 1916, the committee issued its report (109 pp.), which describes in detail the various steps taken by the city, by the com-

mittee, and by private organizations to cope with the situation existing during the winter of 1914-15. The report contains also constructive proposals for a program of immediate relief, for the prevention of unemployment, and for the "organization of permanent machinery to avert the baneful effects in the past associated with it—based largely on foreign experience." A further report appeared in October on *Dock Employment in New York City and Recommendations for its Regulation* (82 pp., 50 cents), which reviews the principal facts concerning the lack of organization in the employment of longshoremen and gives causes and results of their irregular employment. In recommending the centralization of labor supply through a system of clearing houses and other reforms, there is a detailed discussion of foreign methods in regularizing dock employment. A pamphlet on *Planning Public Expenditures to Compensate for Decreased Private Employment during Business Depressions* (32 pp.), issued in November, advocates, as a practicable method of dealing with "cyclical unemployment" in the United States, a policy of public spending on permanent improvements. This policy is defended by a calculation based upon facts established by the successful experience of other countries. Lastly, the committee has prepared a report on *How to Meet Hard Times—A Program for the Prevention and Mitigation of Abnormal Unemployment* (ca. 100 pp., 25 cents), discussing the best means of preparing against such a period as that experienced two years ago. Recommendations are made along the line of action by employers, "high finance" and the government, as well as by the city of New York and its various social agencies, for the establishment of permanent machinery to aid in preventing unemployment and in providing against the distress resulting from it, in addition to methods for relieving distress when it is no longer preventable.

Recent numbers of *Municipal Research*, a monthly publication issued by the New York Bureau of Municipal Research and Training School for Public Service, are as follows: No. 75, July, 1916, is entitled *The Purposes of the Indebtedness of American Cities, 1880-1912* (72 pp.), by Fred Emerson Clark. The appendix contains tables of the debts of cities by population groups and by geographical sections, classified according to the purpose for which the debts are incurred, for the years 1912, 1904, 1890, and 1880. No. 76, August, 1916, is a continuation of an earlier study, being Part II, *The Practical Side of Standardization in American Governments* (48 pp., charts, statistical tables). Part I, which appeared as No. 67, November, 1915, is entitled *The Standardiza-*

tion of Public Employments. Special attention is given to standardization in Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York City, and New York State in general. The issue for September, 1916, No. 77, contains an historical sketch of *City Agencies for Research in Government* (124 pp.). The research bureaus considered are the Boston Finance Commission, the Philadelphia, Dayton and Akron Bureaus of Municipal Research, the Chicago Bureau of Public Efficiency, the Ohio Institute for Public Efficiency, the Milwaukee Citizens' Bureau of Municipal Efficiency, the Bureau of Municipal Research of the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association, and the Bureau of State Research of the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce.

Standardizing public employments has been made the subject of further investigation in a report by Mr. J. L. Jacobs of Chicago at the request of the Milwaukee Citizens' Bureau of Municipal Efficiency. The scope of the report is well indicated by its title, *Review of Movement for Standardization of Public Employments and Appraisal of the Proposed Salary Standardization Plans for the Milwaukee City Service, with Constructive Recommendations and Next Steps for Developing Effective Employment Administration in Milwaukee* (October 28, 1916, 45 pp.). Mr. Jacobs's study is in the main a criticism of a salary-standardization plan under consideration by the Milwaukee common council, prepared by its City Hall Bureau of Municipal Research. It recommends among other things that an ordinance (Appendix B) be adopted establishing the principle of uniform salaries for like duties, services and qualifications as a preliminary basis for future control of employment in the city service; that greater support and more complete organization be provided for the city civil service commission, with an appropriation of not less than \$15,000 for the year 1917; that a scientific and thorough survey of conditions of employment and distribution of positions and salaries be undertaken by the commission in coöperation with the council committee on finance and departmental officials. A number of specific suggestions are made in regard to the methods, essentials and principles to be sought in such a survey. In connection with the survey and the developments which, it is hoped, will follow, the following recommendations are suggested: the establishment of public service schools, providing for training prospective and present public employees for fitness and for higher duties; the establishment of coöperative relations and measures between employers and administrative officials, tending to improve conditions of employment, organization and

methods; the establishment of wide publicity of the opportunities in the public service, encouragement to trained men and women to find a career in official life; the establishment of additional administrative machinery for the purpose of merit control and obtaining legislative authority for same—such as limitation of exemptions from the classified service, establishment of trial boards for disciplinary and other purposes and complete control of employment administration by paid employment specialists; the establishment of a scientific pension system for all employees in the public service.

The Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City has published a report on *Standard Specifications for Personal Service* (1916, pp. 931). The object of the volume is "to furnish a simple and logical classification of all employments in the city government, with general description of duties, appropriate titles and rates of compensation, and conditions governing initial appointment, advancement and promotion as a basis for appropriation and current fiscal and civil service control and for information to present and prospective employees and the public."

Among the pamphlets and reports dealing with municipal government which have been recently issued, the following are of especial interest: *Civil Service Rules of the West Chicago Park Commissioners* (Chicago, 1916, 99 pp.), containing the civil service rules, the Illinois park civil service act, the Fifth Annual Reports of the Civil Service Board and of the Superintendent of Employment and Efficiency Regulations; St. Louis City Plan Commission, *River des Peres Plan. Concerning largely the industrial and residential expansion and economic welfare of St. Louis* (St. Louis, 1916, 38 pp., charts, plans, tables); Adams, Thomas, *City Planning, An address before the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, June 6, 1916* (1916, 23 pp.); State of Colorado, Committee on Unemployment and Relief, *Report of Secretary* (Denver, 1916, 47 pp.); California State Board of Education, *Disposal of Sewage in Rural School Districts*, prepared by C. G. Gillespie and Margaret S. McNaught (Sacramento, 1916, 15 pp., Bulletin No. 17); Brooklyn Bureau of Charities, Tenement House Committee, *Report on the Progress of Housing Reform in Brooklyn and a Study of Land Overcrowding in Brooklyn* (Brooklyn, 1916, 47 pp.); Klink, Bean and Company, *Practical Municipal Accounting. A brief description and summary of the modern uniform system of accounts installed in the offices of the City of Oakland, California*

(San Francisco, 1916, 25 pp., charts); Massachusetts Board of Education, *Annual School Reports of Towns and Cities. A Study of School Reports of Towns and Cities in Massachusetts* (Boston, 1916, 44 pp., charts. Bulletin, 1916, No. 20); and *Information relating to the Establishment and Administration of State-Aided Vocational Schools* (Boston, 1916, 65 pp. Bulletin, 1916, No. 22); Chicago Department of Public Welfare, *Public Comfort Stations* (Chicago, October, 1916, 44 pp. Bulletin I, No. 3); Massachusetts Board of Gas and Electric Light Commissioners, *New Legislation of Especial Interest to Gas, Electric, and Water Companies and Municipalities Owning Lighting Plants, 1916* (Boston, 1916, 28 pp.); *Reports by the New York City Committee on Recreation* (New York, October, 1916, 23 pp.).

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

The American Political Science Association held its thirteenth annual meeting December 27-30 at Cincinnati, Ohio, with headquarters at the Gibson Hotel.

The meeting opened Wednesday evening with a session devoted to the veto power of the governor, the chief papers being presented by Prof. John A. Fairlie and Prof. C. A. Beard. On Thursday morning two sessions were held, one on municipal government in the United States and the other on the teaching of political science below the college. Henry M. Waite, city manager of Dayton, spoke on three years of commissioner-manager government in Dayton and Henry T. Hunt, ex-mayor of Cincinnati, discussed obstacles to municipal progress. Papers by Prof. Thomas F. Moran, Carl E. Pray and Lucius B. Swift were presented on the teaching of political science.

In the afternoon Federico A. Pezet, ex-minister of Peru to the United States, presented a paper on Pan-American coöperation in Pan-American affairs, and Carlos Castro Ruiz, consul general of Chile in the United States, discussed the Monroe Doctrine and the government of Chili. A paper was presented by F. C. Schwedtmann, of the National City Bank of New York, on lending our financial machinery to Latin America.

Contemporaneously with the Latin American meeting was held one on labor legislation and its enforcement, at which Dr. Thomas I. Parkinson and Mrs. Florence Kelley presented the leading papers.

On Thursday evening a joint meeting was held with the American Historical Association, with addresses by Prof. Jesse Macy, president